

**Amendments to the Claims:**

1. (original) A ferrule provided with two alignment pin holes into which alignment pins for positioning with respect to a mating ferrule are inserted, and a plurality of fiber fixed holes, which have an axis line in a plane including the axis lines of said two alignment pin holes and are formed at predetermined intervals between said two alignment pin holes, for inserting an optical fiber, in which

each of said fiber fixed holes has at least a fiber guide hole for guiding the optical fiber, a fiber hole connected with said fiber guide hole to accommodate the tip end of the optical fiber, and a fiber insertion hole connected with said fiber guide hole to introduce the optical fiber into said ferrule, and a connecting portion of said fiber guide hole and said fiber insertion hole is formed into a taper shape,

and said fiber insertion hole is formed so as to introduce the sheathed portion of individual optical fiber.

2. (original) The ferrule according to claim 1, wherein said fiber insertion hole is formed as a common fiber insertion hole for introducing a plurality of sheathed portions, and said fiber insertion hole is provided with movement regulating means for regulating the movement of sheathed portion in the direction of arrangement of sheathed portion.

3. (original) The ferrule according to claim 2, wherein said movement regulating means consists of a convex portion, and the width of said fiber insertion hole in said movement regulating means in the direction perpendicular to the direction of arrangement of sheathed portion is smaller than the diameter of said sheathed portion.

4. (original) The ferrule according to claim 1, wherein an adhesive agent pool for fixing the optical fiber is formed at the opening portion of said fiber insertion hole.

5. (original) The ferrule according to claim 4, wherein the width of the opening portion of said adhesive agent pool in the direction perpendicular to the direction of arrangement of

sheathed portion is larger than the width of said opening portion in the direction of arrangement of sheathed portion.

6-8. (cancelled)

9. (currently amended) ~~The ferrule according to claim 8;~~ A ferrule comprising:  
at least two alignment pin holes into which alignment pins for positioning with respect to a  
mating ferrule are inserted; and  
a plurality of fiber fixed holes for inserting an optical fiber, said fiber fixed holes being  
formed at predetermined locations with respect to said two alignment pin holes;  
wherein each of said fiber fixed holes has at least a fiber guide portion for guiding the optical  
fiber, a fiber hole portion adjacent said fiber guide portion to receive the tip end of the  
optical fiber, and a fiber insertion portion adjacent said fiber guide portion that is  
formed as a common fiber insertion portion to receive a plurality of sheathed portions  
of the optical fiber; and  
wherein said fiber guide portion and said fiber insertion portion are joined with a connecting  
position having a tapered shape, said fiber insertion portion is provided with a  
movement regulating means ~~consists comprising of~~ a convex portion for regulating  
the movement of a sheathed portion of the optical fiber in the direction of arrangement  
of the sheathed portion, and the width of said fiber insertion portion in said movement  
regulating means in the direction perpendicular to the direction of arrangement of the  
sheathed portion is smaller than the diameter of said sheathed portion.

10. (cancelled)

11. (currently amended) ~~The ferrule according to claim 10;~~ A ferrule comprising:  
at least two alignment pin holes into which alignment pins for positioning with respect to a  
mating ferrule are inserted; and  
a plurality of fiber fixed holes for inserting an optical fiber, said fiber fixed holes being  
formed at predetermined locations with respect to said two alignment pin holes;

wherein each of said fiber fixed holes has at least a fiber guide portion for guiding the optical fiber, a fiber hole portion adjacent said fiber guide portion to receive the tip end of the optical fiber, a fiber insertion portion adjacent said fiber guide portion to receive the sheathed portion of the optical fiber, and an adhesive agent pool for fixing the optical fiber formed at the opening portion of said fiber insertion portion; and

wherein said fiber guide portion and said fiber insertion portion are joined with a connecting position having a tapered shape; and the width of the opening portion of said adhesive agent pool in the direction perpendicular to the direction of arrangement of sheathed portion is larger than the width of said opening portion in the direction of arrangement of sheathed portion.

12. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 11, wherein said fiber guide portion and said fiber insertion portion are formed into a continuous taper shape.

13. (new) A ferrule comprising:

at least two alignment pin holes into which alignment pins for positioning with respect to a mating ferrule are inserted; and

a plurality of fiber fixed holes for inserting an optical fiber, said fiber fixed holes being formed at predetermined locations with respect to said two alignment pin holes;

wherein each of said fiber fixed holes has at least a fiber guide portion for guiding the optical fiber, a fiber hole portion adjacent said fiber guide portion to receive the tip end of the optical fiber, a fiber insertion portion adjacent said fiber guide portion to receive the sheathed portion of the optical fiber, and an adhesive agent pool for fixing the optical fiber formed at the opening portion of said fiber insertion portion, said fiber guide portion and said fiber insertion portion being joined with a connecting position having a tapered shape, said fiber insertion portion being provided with a movement regulation means comprising a convex portion for regulating the movement of a sheathed portion of the optical fiber in the direction of arrangement of the sheathed portion;

wherein the width of the opening portion of said adhesive agent pool in the direction

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perpendicular to the direction of arrangement of sheathed portion is larger than the width of said opening portion in the direction of arrangement of sheathed portion.